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## EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

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(54) **A flexible system and method for communicating between a broad range of networks and devices**

(57) A flexible gateway accommodates data transfer from a data origination device over a wide variety of networks to a wide variety of destination devices, even if those networks use different protocols, and even if the devices recognize different data formats. Thus, the gateway can perform work previously requiring numerous gateways. After the gateway receives information from a data source, the gateway identifies the specific device type and the specific network type to which the information is to be routed. The gateway then calls device and network drivers associated with the specific device and network identified with the destination device. These drivers then manipulate the data using the device

driver into the format recognized by the destination device, and then provide the manipulated data to the destination device over the identified network using the compatible protocol. Thus, the destination device properly receives and interprets the information provided by the data source. If, in the very next moment, data arrives at the gateway that is to be routed over a different network using a different protocol to a different device recognizing a different device, the gateway will call different device and network drivers to enable the communication.



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## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 00 30 8747

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims					
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner			
MUNICH	5 November 2003	Kamps, S			
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& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document					



DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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